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GEORGE'S

THE BIBLE



THE BIBLE

GEORGEY'S MENAGERIE.



JOHN ANDREW

BY
MRS. MADELINE LESLIE

GEORGEY'S MENAGERIE.

THE BEAR.

BY

MRS. MADELINE LESLIE,

AUTHOR OF "ROBIN'S NEST," "LITTLE FRANKIE," "MINNIE AND HER PETS,"
THE "LESLIE STORIES," AND NUMEROUS OTHER BOOKS
FOR THE YOUNG.

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Baker

**ANDOVER:
STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED
BY W. F. DRAPEL.**

GEORGEY'S MENAGERIE.

VOLUME I. THE LION.

VOLUME II. THE ELEPHANT.

VOLUME III. THE CAMEL.

VOLUME IV. THE WOLF.

VOLUME V. THE BEAR.

VOLUME VI. THE DEER.

These Small Volumes

ON

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ANIMALS

**WHOSE STRUCTURE AND HABITS SO CLEARLY EVINCE THE BEING,
WISDOM, AND POWER OF GOD, ARE AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED TO**

FRANCIS DAVIS BAKER,

BY HIS LOVING MOTHER,

**IN THE EARNEST HOPE THAT THEY MAY LEAD HIS TENDER MIND
THROUGH NATURE UP TO NATURE'S GOD.**

THE BEAR.

CHAPTER I

THE PARTY AND THE BEAR.

It was now the very last of July. After three days of steady rain, again the sun shone out bright and clear.

“Just the day for a berry party!” shouted Georgey, running into the room where his

father, mother, and uncle were awaiting breakfast.

“Yes, so it is,” replied Mr. Sears, entering into the boy’s enthusiasm. “The sun will have dried up the dampness by eleven. What do you say, Mary?” addressing Georgey’s mother; “will you go?”

Before she answered, she glanced at her boy’s flushed, eager face. It was pleading as strongly as looks could plead

for her to consent. She could not resist.

“I had planned for a visit to the city to-day,” she said, smiling; “but I can put off my engagement there.” Then turning to her husband, she asked, “Can’t you leave the store for one day and join us?”

“How long shall you stay?” I suppose I might meet you there in the afternoon. But who is going? The more the

merrier, in a berry party, you know."

Georgey crowded close to his father and spoke eagerly, "Jimmy and his cousins have been wanting to go berrying ever since the berries began to be ripe; and Conny said her aunt had promised to go with them to the woods. May I run over and ask them all?"

"Yes; and Mr. Morse's family, and Mr. Jeffries'."

“ We’ll take an early lunch, so as to start about eleven; then you can meet us there soon after dinner. Thomas will make all the arrangements.”

Georgey, laughing with delight, ran hastily away to invite the neighbors, while his uncle went to consult Michel about ways and means of transporting the whole family to the woods about two miles distant.

Mrs. Ray meant to combine profit with pleasure, and therefore invited both cook and nurse to join them; Michel, of course, being in requisition to take the care of the horses.

An animated discussion now followed as to the number and size of the pails which would be requisite,—cook declaring she should be ashamed to show her face if she couldn't fill the six-quart pail, while nurse more

modest took a pint dipper. At length all was in readiness, and the invited persons having most of them signified their acceptance, the party from Mr. Ray's started off in the market wagon, drawn by the coach-horses, in high glee, cook holding fast her large pail, and looking with contempt on the small dipper nurse daintily twisted on her finger.

“Now,” said Mrs. Ray, with

mock gravity, "if your menagerie were filled with live animals, you couldn't go off berrying."

"No, mamma; I thought when I saw the animals at Van Amburgh's Menagerie, that I had rather have lions and bears that couldn't growl. I wonder whether the boys will remember that to-night is the time for them to come and hear about the bear."

“They will be too tired to-night, my dear. You had better postpone the meeting till to-morrow night.”

In due time they arrived at the field, and found one carriage only had preceded them. The berries were large and abundant, and cook, leaving her silk mantilla in the wagon, soon separated herself from the rest, and set to work in earnest to fill her pail; while

Georgey, with visions of berry puddings, berry pies, and berry cake floating through his mind, marched off in an opposite direction to do his part toward such an entertainment.

It was near three o'clock when Mr. Ray joined them. He found the whole party, rather warm with their exercise, seated in the shade of a cluster of trees, while Mr.

Sears and the other gentlemen, assisted by Michel, were cutting bushes for them to pick from.

The clock was striking six as they reached home, with appetites eager for the supper of berries and milk which had been promised them.

“I wish the boys were coming to-night,” exclaimed Georgy, as, after an abundant repast, he arose from the table.

“I don’t feel at all tired ; and I do so want to hear about the bear. Is there anything about bears in the Bible, Uncle Thomas ? ”

“ Why, Georgey ! ” said his mother, “ don’t you remember about the wicked children who mocked the good prophet Elisha ? ”

“ Oh yes, indeed, mamma ! I know that story quite well ; only I forgot for a minute. It

was after Elijah had gone up to heaven in a chariot of fire; and the naughty children, when they saw Elisha coming, cried out as loud as they could, ‘Go up, thou bald-head, go ;’ as if they wanted to get rid of him too.”

“Or rather,” explained his uncle, “as if they would say, ‘Elijah was a prophet and went up to heaven; let’s see you go up there too, if you can, you

old bald-head.' It would have been wicked for them to mock any old man by alluding to his bald head, a sign of age ; but especially to make a mock of God's prophet, and at the way in which Jehovah had called Elijah home to heaven. To show his exceeding displeasure at their sin, God sent two she-bears out of the woods and tare forty and two children of them.

“The she-bears are very fierce when they have cubs, which, according to naturalists, they love with a ferocious distraction. The males of many species devour the little ones whenever they have an opportunity, but the females defend them with great fury.

“What a warning this story is to children against irreverence of the aged, or against mockery of sacred things !”

CHAPTER II.

THE GRISLY BEAR.

“TO-NIGHT I shall begin to tell you about the Bear,” said Mr. Sears, when he found that his young audience were ready.

“There are a great many kinds of bears. The most formidable one in our country is the grisly bear, like this

before you, the only species that in general attacks mankind. Its length is from six to nine feet, its weight from four hundred to eight hundred pounds. Its fore claws, which, as you see, are much curved, measure six inches : much better adapted for digging than for climbing. Indeed, the full-grown grisly bear does not ascend trees, though the young ones frequently do. The hair

is long, and thick, and grizzled. It is seldom that two can be found exactly alike in color. Sometimes they are a yellowish gray, but generally a blackish kind of brown. The young are generally black. The eyes are small, and sunk in the head.

“The neighborhood of the Rocky Mountains is one of the principal haunts of this savage animal. There, amidst wood-

ed plains and tangled copses of bough and underwood, he reigns as much the monarch as the lion is of the wastes of Africa.

“He is so strong that he will drag the ponderous carcass of the bison which he has killed, weighing often a thousand pounds, to a convenient spot; where he digs a pit for its reception, and repairs to it till the store is exhausted.

They ramble about in search of food both by night and day. In general their aspect and manner are in the highest degree savage and morose ; but it appears from the accounts of travellers that the almost universal love of fun implanted in the animal creation invades the breasts of these horrid monsters.

“The young cubs, we are told, when they find them-

selves alone in their solitary abode, have their games of hide-and-seek, leap-frog, and wrestling with each other, as well as other bears. Sometimes the gruff and gnarled old fathers and mothers join in the sport.

“They live partly on wild plums, buffalo berries, and other vegetable dainties; but flesh is their chosen food. Any animal they can seize falls a

prey to their voracity. The she-bears and their young remain quiet during the winter, subsisting on the vast accumulation of fat in the mother's body, formed there the previous summer. The males rove about as at other times.

“This animal is very tenacious of life; one has been known to receive fifteen bullets before he was killed.

“I once read a story of the

grisly bear, written by Sir John Richardson, which I will tell you.

“ A party of voyagers, who had been employed all day in tracking a canoe up the Saskatchewan River, had seated themselves, in the twilight, by a fire, and were busy in preparing their supper, when a large grisly bear sprang over the canoe that was tilted behind them, and, seizing one of

the party by the shoulder, carried him off. The rest fled in terror, with the exception of an Indian, named Bourasso, who, grasping his gun, followed the bear as it was retreating leisurely with its prey. He called to his unfortunate comrade that he was afraid of hitting him if he fired at the bear; but the latter entreated him to fire immediately, as the beast was squeezing him to death.

“On this, he took a deliberate aim, and discharged his piece into the body of the bear, which instantly dropped its prey to pursue Bourasso. He escaped with difficulty, and the bear retreated to a thicket, where it was supposed to have died. The man who was rescued had his arm fractured, and was otherwise severely bitten, but finally recovered.”

“Wasn’t that bear a bold fellow?” asked Jimmy, laughing.

Georgey nodded his head approvingly, while Mr. Sears went on: “A traveller by the name of Drummond, in his excursions over the Rocky Mountains, had frequent opportunities of observing the manners of the grisly bear. He says it often happened that, in turning the point of a rock or sharp angle

of a valley, he came suddenly upon one or more of them.

“On such occasions they reared on their hind legs, and made a loud noise like a person breathing quick, but much harsher. He kept his ground without attempting to molest them; and they on their part, after attentively regarding him for a time, generally wheeled round and galloped off. Probably if he had lost

his presence of mind, and attempted to fly, he would have been torn in pieces.

“When this gentleman discovered them from a distance, he generally frightened them away by beating on a large tin box in which he carried his specimens of plants.

“He never saw more than four together, and two of these he supposed to be large cubs. But he often met them alone

or in pairs. He was only once attacked, and then by a female, for the purpose of allowing her cubs to escape. His gun on this occasion missed fire; but he kept her off with the stock of it until some of the Hudson Bay Company, with whom he was travelling, came up and drove her off."

"Was that a grisly bear, Uncle Thomas, that we saw in the menagerie?"

“No, Georgey, that was the common brown bear, the species that usually accompany travelling menageries. Bears are distinguished by the great clumsiness of form, together with a great degree of brutal force, stupidity, and gluttony. The clumsy figure is caused not only by their great muscularity, but by their tendency to produce fat, as well as by the long rough coat of fur

which enwraps their forms. The tongue, which in cats is so rough, is quite smooth in bears; the ears are moderate, and well clothed with fur; the pupil of the eye is circular.”

CHAPTER III.

THE BLACK BEAR.

“WHAT kind of bears shall you tell us about to-night, Mr. Sears?” inquired Jimmy Glazier, running into the yard to meet the gentleman, whom he saw standing on the piazza.

“Let me see,” answered the gentleman, smiling. “I think

the American black bear comes next."

He looked at his watch, and then said, "It is time to go; I had no idea it was so late."

"Is a black bear very different from this, sir?"

"Yes, Jimmy; in size and form, he is more like the brown bear, about which I shall tell you next time. His color is a shining jet black, except on the muzzle or nose,

where it is fawn colored. The hair, except on the nose, is long and straight. The cubs are at first of a bright ash color, which gradually changes as they grow older.

“In the American black bear, the head is narrower, the ears far apart, and the muzzle longer than in other bears. The tail is very short, the claws short and blunt, and the whole form thick and clumsy.

“This bear originally inhabited nearly every wooded district of the North American continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. It is still common to all the unsettled countries, except California, where it seems to be replaced by the grisly bear. It seldom exceeds six feet in length from the tip of the muzzle to the end of the tail.

“This bear lives a solitary

life in forests and uncultivated deserts. Its favorite food seems to be berries of different kinds, fruits, and the young shoots and roots of vegetables; but when these are not to be procured, it preys upon insects, fish, eggs, and such birds and quadrupeds as it can surprise. It does not eat animal food from choice; for when it has abundance of its favorite vegetable diet, it will pass the



the same manner as the other birds, and
it is not until the young are hatched
that the female begins to feed them.
The male bird is the one that
builds the nest, and it is not until
the eggs are laid that the female
begins to feed them. The male
bird is the one that builds the nest,
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BEAR IN SEARCH OF HONEY. Page 45.

carcass of even a deer without touching it.

“Of honey it is exceeding fond ; and as he is a most expert climber, he scales the forest trees in search of it. Its aspect is savage and morose ; and even when partially domesticated, it does not appear to have the sociable and humorous qualities of the European bear.

“This bear is a timid animal,

and will seldom face a man unless it is wounded, or has its retreat cut off, or is urged by affection for its young.

“As the fur is of some value, the Indians engage with ardor in the chase of the creature. About the end of December, from the abundance of fruits in Louisiana and the neighborhood, the bears become so fat and lazy that they can scarcely run. This is the

time they are hunted. The animal generally chooses its retreat in the hollow of an old cyprus tree, which it climbs, and then descends into the cavity from above.

“The hunter watches him and sees him enter; he climbs a neighboring tree, and seats himself opposite the hole. In one hand he holds his gun, and in the other a torch which he darts into the cavity. Fran-

tic with rage and terror, the bear makes a spring from his station; but the hunter seizes the instant of his appearance and shoots him. In colder districts, where the timber is of large size, the bears often shelter themselves in the hollows of trees, where they lie dormant for several months.

“The Indians remark that a bear never retires to its den for the winter until it has ac-

quired a thick coat of fat; but in coming forth in the spring it is very lean, the fat having been absorbed for the nutriment of the system during its torpidity.

“The young bears are not much bigger than kittens at the time of their birth. They lie carefully hidden in a cave or hollow tree until they are able to go forth. They are harmless creatures, sportive as

puppies, full of pranks, running and leaping over each other like a parcel of boys. The hunters tell us that they often go off and hide themselves, to tease their anxious mothers. After a time they come back, grinning and leering, in a manner truly amusing, and seem to think it an excellent joke."

"O, Uncle Thomas! how funny that is!" exclaimed

Georgey. "I should admire to see them."

"I have no doubt of it," remarked the gentleman, archly.

"When the bear comes out of its winter retreat, it wanders along the margins of lakes or ponds. In summer it retires to the gloomy swamps, where it feeds on nettles, fish, and roots. Occasionally, a stray pig, calf, or cow diversify its fare. One of its great pleas-

ures is to wallow in the mud like a hog. Sometimes it makes a raid into a cornfield, where it causes great havoc.

“As autumn advances, nuts, acorns, grapes, and berries become its food. About this time, too, many a bee-tree is ravaged of its honey to feed this avaricious and greedy brute.

“The black bear, in spite of his clumsy shape, wallops over

the ground with great speed. If closely pursued by dogs, it climbs a tree, but descends and gives battle on the approach of the hunters.

“A blow of its huge paw will kill the largest dog in an instant. On account of its skin, which is much prized, as well as the worth of its oil, valued for the hair, it is keenly hunted by the trapper. Scarcely a season passes, that the

villagers of Maine, and even the northern parts of Vermont and New Hampshire, are not invited to this sport by the visits of these animals in their vicinity.

“The modes of taking them are various. There is one way that I think will please you. They are known to be very fond of honey; and sometimes the hunters fix to those trees where honey is hived a

heavy log of wood at the end of a long string. When the unwieldy creature climbs up to get at the hive, he finds himself interrupted by the log. He pushes it aside, and attempts to pass it; but in returning it hits him such a blow that in a rage he flings it from him with greater force, which makes it return with increased violence, and he sometimes continues this till

he is either killed or falls from the tree.

“If captured early, this bear may be trained to a certain degree of tameness, and be taught many tricks.

“In the Tower menagerie of London, there is a very tame and playful American black bear, which was presented to it in 1824. He was originally in the same den with the hyena, and, except at feed-

ing times, was on good terms with his companion; but a piece of meat would occasionally produce a temporary quarrel between them, in which the hyena, though the smaller of the two, had usually the upper hands. At such times the defeated bear would moan most piteously, in a tone somewhat like a sheep bleating, while the hyena devoured the remains of his dinner.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BROWN BEAR.

“I HOPE, Uncle Thomas, you have some funny stories to tell us to-night about the brown bear,” said Georgey, as Mr. Sears and his young friends entered the menagerie.

“The brown bear is a funny animal,” replied the gentleman.
“It is, in many respects, similar

to the black bear of America, and about four feet long by two and a half in height. It is the pet of menageries, especially in Europe; and not unfrequently they have been taught to dance and tumble in a manner exceedingly amusing to the spectators. He is almost as much a humorist, in his way, as a monkey; and the odd contrast between the gravity of his looks, and the

drollness of his capers is irresistibly ludicrous.

“There was, and perhaps is still, a custom in the city of Oxford in England to carry on Christmas day a bear’s head, crowned with a wreath, before a procession.

“The origin of this custom is said to be, that, in ancient days, the times of bears, a professor of the University, walking in the forest and reading

Aristotle, was met by a bear, who ran upon him with his mouth wide open. Upon this, the professor rammed the book into his throat, saying: 'Eat it; it is Greek.'

"Whether the animal survived the shock, we are not informed.

"The voice of this bear is a kind of growl, a harsh murmur, which, when enraged, especially, is heightened by a

clashing of the teeth. However mild he may appear before his master, and even obedient when tamed, he ought still to be distrusted, and treated with caution, for he is highly susceptible of anger, and is often capricious.

“There are few who have not seen the brown bear stand on his hind legs, or with these dance in rude and awkward measure to tunes either sung,

or played on some musical instrument.

“The bear who has passed his youth, cannot be tamed, and is fearless of danger.

“He enjoys the senses of seeing, hearing, and feeling in great perfection ; and yet, compared with the size of his body, his eye is very small. His ears are also short ; his skin is coarse, and his hair very thick. His smell is exquisite ; more

so, perhaps, than that of any other animal: He rears on his hind feet, and strikes with his paws as a man does with his fists."

"That bear we saw at the menagerie, stood up," said Willie Morse.

"In no part of the world," continued Mr. Sears, "are bears more numerous than at Kamstchatka, and nowhere are they so gentle. They rove about

the plains in large droves ; yet they never disturb the women and girls who gather roots and herbs, or turf for fuel, in the very midst of them ; they will even eat out of the children's hands.

“ This mildness, however, does not prevent them from being hunted ; and there is in the case of these poor Kamstchadales some excuse for this ingratitude ; for they would

find it difficult indeed to live without the necessary articles supplied by the spoils of the bear. Beds, coverlets, caps, gloves, shoe-soles, and collars for sledge-dogs, are made from the skin. The fat is savory and nutritious as food, and when melted is used as oil. The flesh, too, is highly esteemed, and even the shoulder-blades are converted into sickles for cutting grass. The

intestines, when prepared, are worn by the women as masks, to protect the face from the sun, and are also converted into excellent panes for the windows.

“To the bear, again, the Kamstchadale is likewise indebted for his scanty knowledge of physic and surgery, which he acquires by noticing what herbs the animal applies to his wounds, or eats when

he is laboring under disease. From the bear, too, he learns to dance ; his bear-dance, as he calls it, being nothing more than a close imitation of his shaggy instructors.

• “ Although the bear has long been extirpated from England, the brown species was once common there.

“ Two or three centuries ago, it was imported for baiting, a sport in which the nobility,

and even royalty itself, delighted. A bear-baiting was one of the recreations offered to Queen Elizabeth in her celebrated visit to Kenilworth.

“In the Garden of Plants at Paris, there are two deep pits, walled in, and railed round, in which there are several bears, black, brown, and white. They are objects of the liveliest interest to visitors, and especially to the children.

“ The huge beasts will lie down, roll over, assume a begging posture, making funny faces, and play many pranks, for the petty love of pieces of cake or bread thrown to them. Sometimes one of them will climb up the trunk of a dry tree planted in the centre of the yard. Such a feat generally secures him a cake worth a cent.”

“ I wish that bear had acted

so in the menagerie," whispered Conny.

"Some years since, a bear in this collection was, if we may use the expression, one of the curiosities of Paris. His name was Martin; and as all the people of Paris were freely admitted to the garden, every person became acquainted with him.

"During the hours of exhibition, the railing of the bear-

den was thronged with men, women, and children, and the cry of 'Martin!' 'Martin!' was heard on all sides.

"The creature knew his name, and, at the call, performed his various feats of grimacing, tumbling, and attitudinizing. But this was not his only claim to notice. Some hard stories were told about him."

"Wont you please tell us

about him, sir?" asked little Annie, timidly.

"Yes, dear."

"One night, the sentry, looking down into the yard, while the bear was asleep in his lair, observed in the flickering light what he thought was a twenty-franc gold piece upon the stone floor. He got a ladder and went down, but was disappointed to find that the supposed coin was a brass suspender-button.

“He uttered a cry, upon which the bear, aroused from his slumber, descended, in his usual agile manner, and made a hearty meal of the unfortunate sentinel.

“That is as the story was told; but the fact was, that the man was found dead in the morning, with Bruin sitting by him. He probably fell from the ladder, and was killed outright in the fall.”

“Do bears live as long as lions, uncle?”

“Not quite, Georgey, though they are long lived. There was one at Berne that had been confined there thirty-one years; and another is spoken of at the age of forty-seven in the menagerie at Paris.

“Bears are excellent swimmers, notwithstanding their uncouth appearance.”

CHAPTER V.

THE POLAR BEAR.

“TO-NIGHT, I shall introduce to you the Polar bear, or, as some call it, the ice bear.

“It is an inhabitant of the dreary regions which surround the North Pole with eternal frosts, and of those coasts which are rarely free from ice. Animals of the land and of

the sea, birds and their eggs, the dead and the living, are its food. An admirable swimmer and diver, and of great strength, he often captures the seal, and is said to attack the walrus itself.

“One traveller saw a Polar bear dive after a salmon, and with success, for he killed his fish.

“This species is distinguished by his tremendous fe-

rocity. Its head is very much longer and more flat, and the whole body is longer, than that of other bears. The ears and mouth are remarkably small, the neck very long and thick, and the sole of the foot large. The fur is silvery white, tinged with yellow, close and short even on the head, neck, and upper part of the back, while it is long, fine, and inclined to be woolly on the legs and belly.

“The sole of the foot exhibits a beautiful instance of the wisdom of the Creator in adapting means to the end; for it is almost entirely covered with long hair, affording the animal a firm footing on the ice. The claws are black, not much curved, but thick, short, and of great strength.

“The average length of this bear is about six feet; but in some instances they have

reached a much greater size. Sir John Ross records the measure of one that was seven feet ten inches, and the weight of the beast six hundred and ten pounds; and Captain Lyon states that one, which was unusually large, measured eight feet seven and a half inches, and weighed sixteen hundred pounds. The accounts given of the size, strength, and ferocity of this animal are appalling.

“Barentz, a traveller, states that, in Nova Zembla, they attacked his sailors, carried them off in their mouths with the utmost ease, and devoured them in sight of their comrades.

“But even this formidable animal is not without its good qualities. It is a faithful mate, as well as an affectionate parent. One writer tells us that at certain seasons of the year the males are so much attached

to their mates that he has often seen one of them, on a female being killed, come and put his paws over her, and suffer himself to be shot rather than to abandon her."

"Isn't that good of him, uncle?"

"Yes; such fidelity is a noble trait. I have a very affecting story to tell you of the love of the female for her young.

"A frigate went out many

years ago to make discoveries toward the North Pole, and was locked in the ice. Early one morning, the man at the masthead gave notice that three bears were making their way very fast over the frozen ocean, and were directing their course toward the ship. They had no doubt been drawn there by the scent of the walrus that the crew had killed a few days before.

“They proved to be a she-bear and her two cubs; but the cubs were nearly as large as their mother. They all ran eagerly to the fire on the ice, where the refuse of the walrus was burning, drew out of the flames the part of the flesh that was not consumed, and ate it voraciously.

“The crew then threw on the ice great lumps of the sea-horse which they had re-

maining. These the old bear fetched away separately, laid every piece before her cubs as she brought it, divided it, and gave to each a share, reserving only a small portion for herself. As she was carrying away the last piece, the sailors levelled their muskets at the cubs and shot them both dead; and in her retreat they wounded the dam, but not mortally.

“It was truly an affecting

sight to witness the concern expressed by this poor beast in the last moments of her expiring young cubs. Though she was herself dreadfully wounded, and could scarcely crawl to the place where they lay, she carried the lump of flesh she had taken from the side of the ship; and, as she had done before, she tore it in pieces and laid it before them; and when she saw that they

refused to eat, she laid her paws first upon one and then on the other, and tried to raise them up.

“When she found she could not stir them, she went off, looking back as soon as she had gone a little distance, and moaning for them to follow. Finding this was to no purpose, she returned, and, smelling round them, began to lick their wounds.

“She returned in this way the second and third time, trying to coax them to follow, and, when she found they could not, pawing and moaning over them with signs of inexpressible fondness. Finding at last that they were cold and lifeless, she raised her head toward the ship and uttered a growl of despair, which the sailors returned with a volley of musket-balls.

“She fell between her cubs, and died licking their wounds.”

“That was too bad,” said Conny, tears filling her blue eyes.

“Dr. Kane, in his Arctic Explorations, furnishes us many interesting sketches of the Polar bear,” continued the gentleman.

“In one instance, he saw a specimen of these huge beasts sliding down hill on his rump,

the hill being an immense declivity of ice. Whether the bear was doing this for fun, or as a short cut in the progress of his journey, does not appear."

"Oh, how queer for bears to coast!" laughed little Willie.

"All bears seem to enjoy fun," remarked Mr. Sears; "but I have another story to tell you from Dr. Kane.

"At one time his party met

with one of these formidable animals and her cub. The bear fled; but the little one, being unable either to keep ahead of the dogs or to keep pace with her, she turned back, and, putting her head under its haunches, threw it some distance ahead.

“The cub safe for the moment, she would wheel around and face the dogs, so as to give it a chance to run away;

but the little creature always stopped where it alighted, till she came up and threw it ahead again. It seemed to expect her aid, and would not go on without it. Sometimes the mother would run a few yards ahead, as if to coax the young one up to her; and when the dogs came up, she would turn on them and drive them back; then as they dodged her blows, she would rejoin the

cub and push it on, sometimes putting her head under it, sometimes catching it in her mouth by the nape of the neck.

“For a time she managed her retreat with great skill, leaving the two men who had started after her quite in the rear. The battle had commenced on the ice; but she led the dogs in shore, up a small stony valley that opened into the interior. After she

had gone a mile and a half, her pace slackened, and the little one being jaded, she soon came to a halt."

CHAPTER VI.

INCIDENTS OF THE BEAR.

“Do tell us, Uncle Thomas, whether that little bear got away from the dogs.”

“You must understand, my dear, that the bear can run quite fast, notwithstanding its enormous bulk. Captain Lyon, who knows them well, describes their pace when at full

speed as a kind of shuffle, as quick as the sharp gallop of a horse.

“The bear I was telling you about had run on until the men were half a mile behind, so that, when she halted, by running at full speed they came up to where the dogs were holding her at bay.

“The fight now became a desperate one. The mother might easily have saved her-

self, but she would not abandon her cub. She never went more than two yards ahead, constantly looking at it, as if entreating it to follow.

“When the dogs came near her, she would sit on her haunches, and take the little one between her hind legs, fighting the dogs with her paws, and roaring so that she could have been heard more than a mile off.

“ Never did a poor animal seem more distressed. She would stretch out her long neck and sweep at the nearest dog with her shining teeth, whirling her paws like the arms of a windmill. If she missed her aim, not daring to pursue one dog, lest the others should harm her cub, she would give a great roar of baffled rage, and go on pawing and snapping and facing the

ring, grinning at them with her mouth stretched wide open.

“ When the men came up, the little one had become rested; for it was able to turn around with its dam, no matter how quick she moved, so as to keep always in front of her belly. The five dogs were all the time frisking round her, actually tormenting her like so many gad-flies; indeed, they made it difficult for the men

to shoot without killing them. But Hans, lying on his elbow, took a quick aim, and shot her through the head. She dropped instantly, and rolled over dead, without moving a muscle.

“The dogs sprang toward her at once; but the cub jumped up on her body, and reared up for the first time, growling hoarsely. They appeared quite afraid of the little

creature, she fought so actively and made so much noise; and while tearing mouthfuls of hair from the dead mother, they would spring aside the moment the cub turned toward them. The men drove the dogs off for a time, but were at last obliged to shoot the cub, as she would not quit the body."

"I'm real sorry," whispered Conny. "I should think they would have saved her alive."

Mr. Sears smiled. "The Polar bear," he went on, "resides principally on the fields of ice, and in this way is frequently drifted far from the land. Indeed, these animals are often carried as far as the coast of Iceland, where they commit such ravages on the flocks that the inhabitants rise in a body to destroy them.

"At the commencement of winter the she-bear is very fat



THE SINKING OF AN OLD BRIG. 1850.

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POLAR BEAR ON AN ICEBERG. Page 102.

and always solitary. When a heavy fall of snow sets in, she seeks some hollow place in which she can lie down and there remain quiet while the snow covers her. Sometimes she waits until a quantity of the snow has fallen, and then digs herself a cave.

“Then she goes to sleep, and does not wake up until the spring sun is pretty high, when her two cubs are born.

By this time, her cave has become much larger from the effect of her warmth and breath, so that the little ones can move about; and they soon grow strong by constant sucking. The dam at length becomes so thin and weak that it is with great difficulty she extricates herself from the snow which forms the roof to her den.

“The natives find and kill

the bears during their confinement, by means of dogs, which scent them through the snow, and begin scratching and howling eagerly.

“As it would not be safe to make a large opening, a long trench is cut of sufficient width to enable a man to look down and see where her head lies. He then selects a mortal part, into which he thrusts his spear. The old one being killed, the

hole is broken open, and the cubs may be taken out by hand; as, having tasted no blood, and never having been at liberty, they are very harmless and quiet.

“The Polar bears are remarkably sagacious. The captain of a Greenland whaler, being anxious to procure a bear without injuring the skin, made trial of a stratagem of laying the noose of a rope in the snow

and placing a piece of meat within.

“ A bear ranging the neighboring ice was soon enticed to the spot by the smell of burning meat. He perceived the bait, approached and seized it in his mouth ; but his foot at the same time, by a jerk of the rope, being entangled in the noose, he pushed it off with his paw, and deliberately retired. After having eaten the

piece he carried off with him, he returned. The noose with another piece of meat having been replaced, he pushed aside the rope, and again walked triumphantly off with the bait.

“ A third time the noose was laid; but, excited to caution by former experience, the sailors buried the rope beneath the snow, and laid the bait in a deep hole dug in the centre. The bear once more approached,

and the sailors were sure of capturing him. But Bruin, more sagacious than they expected, after snuffing about the place for a few minutes, scraped the snow away with his paw, threw the rope aside, and again escaped unhurt with his prize."

"He was a sharp one," exclaimed Jimmy Glazier, nodding his head triumphantly.

"The Kamstchatka bears are sharp too," rejoined Mr.

Sears, archly ; “ and have recourse to a singular stratagem in order to catch their prey, the bareins, which are much too swift for them.

“ These animals keep together in large herds, mostly frequenting the low grounds ; and they love to browse at the base of rocks and precipices. The bear hunts them by scent, till he comes in sight, when he advances, warily, keeping

above them on the high ground and concealing himself among the rocks, as he makes his approach, till he gets immediately over them and near enough for his purpose. He then begins to push down with his paws pieces of rock among the herd below.

“ This manœuvre is not followed by any attempt to pursue, until he finds that he has maimed one of the herd, when

he instantly rushes to rescue, and generally succeeds in capturing the poor animal, unless the injury has been so slight that he can escape with his companions.

“Before I close the account of the white or Polar bear,” remarked the gentleman, “I must tell you that the Laplanders hold it in great veneration, and call it the dog of God. Among the Norwegians

there has long been a proverb that the bear has the strength of ten men and the sense of twelve. They never presume to call it a bear, lest it should resent the insult on their flocks, but make mention of it as the "old man with a fur cloak."

CHAPTER VII.

OTHER VARIETIES OF THE BEAR.

“ARE there any other bears, Uncle Thomas?” asked Georgy, when the boys had again assembled.

“Yes, my boy; beside the grisly, black, brown, and white bears, there are a number of other varieties which I shall name to you.

“The Norway bear is not inferior in size and ferocity to the grisly bear of our own country. The she-bear, like all others, is very formidable when she has occasion to defend her young. In case of danger she drives them into the trees for safety. Sometimes in doing this she uses so much violence that the cries of the poor little creatures may be heard a considerable

way off. She then retreats to some distance.

“This is a sure token that she means to defend her cubs ; and it is then very dangerous to approach them until settlement is first made with the mother, who is sure to attack the assailant with fury.

“The Syrian bear is of another species. This is the kind of bear named so often in the Bible ; no doubt the same as

tore the forty-two children. Two fine specimens of the Syrian bear have been in the Zoological Gardens.

“It is of a fulvous white, varied with tawny spots. It preys on the flocks with which that country abounds, and is a great terror to the shepherds, few of whom are as skilful in delivering their flocks as David, who slew both a lion and a bear in order to save one of

his lambs. They are sly and skulking, thus illustrating the words of the prophet Jeremiah, 'He was to me like a bear lying in wait.'

• "They are all savage when in defence of their young; as we read in Samuel, where Hushai overthrows the council of Ahithophel. He says to Absalom, 'Thou knowest thy father and his men that they be mighty men, and that they be

chafed in their minds as a bear robbed of her whelps.'

"There are many other passages in the Bible of similar import. 'I will meet them,' it is written, 'as a bear robbed of her whelps.' Again, 'His feet were as the feet of a bear, swift to do evil.'"

"I shall always like to read the Bible better now," said Georgey, "because I can understand it."

“ I shall feel more than repaid for all the pains I have taken to teach you, if that proves the case,” remarked Mr. Sears, well pleased with what his nephew had said. “ But I must hasten to tell you about the jungle bear, sometimes called, also, the big-lipped, or sloth bear, which inhabits the mountainous parts of India.”

“ It is of the size of the brown bear, and has a most

uncouth, deformed appearance. Its back is humped, its limbs are short, and its head depressed. Its nose is capable of extension, and its fur long and shaggy, of a black color with brown spots. Under the neck, and on the breast, is a white mark. It lives in caverns, and feeds on fruit, honey, and white ants. In captivity, it is mild but melancholy.

“A pair of these were kept

for some time in the gardens of the Zoological Society. They lived very sociably, and often lay huddled together, uttering a kind of rattling but low whine, which was monotonous but not unmusical, and was termed their song. The paw was generally at the mouth when they made this noise.

“Next comes the Maylayan or sun bear, which is jet black,

with the muzzle of a yellowish tint, and has, like the jungle bear, a white mark on its breast. Its appetite for delicacies is extremely keen. The honey made by bees in its native forests is a favorite food; and certainly the great length of the tongue is well adapted for feeding on it. Vegetables, however, form its chief diet, though it will leave them for the young shoots of the cocoanut trees.

“The sun bear has frequently been taken and domesticated. In confinement it is mild and sagacious. Sir Stamford Baffles has given an interesting description of one which appears to have been deservedly a great favorite.

“‘It was taken young,’ he says, ‘and became very tame. He lived two years in my possession, brought up in the nursery with the children.

When admitted to my table, as was frequently the case—' ”

“ A bear at the table ! ” interrupted Georgey, in surprise.

“ Yes ; ‘ he gave a proof of his taste by refusing to eat any but the most delicious fruit, or to drink any wine but champagne. The only time when I ever knew him to be out of humor was on an occasion when no wine was given him. He was naturally of an

affectionate disposition, and it was never found necessary to chain or chastise him.

“ ‘It was usual for this bear, the cat, the dog, and a small blue mountain bird, to mess together, and eat out of the same dish. His favorite play-fellow was the dog, whose teasing and worrying were always borne and returned with the utmost good-humor and playfulness.

“ ‘As the sun bear grew up, he became a very powerful animal. In his rambles in the garden he would lay hold of the largest plantains, the stems of which he could scarcely embrace, and tear them up by the roots.’ ”

“That is the best kind of bear, I think,” urged Jimmy, earnestly.

“The Bornean bear is very similar, only that it has a large

orange patch on its chest, instead of a white one. In size, it is supposed to be rather less. One of these, exhibited in the Tower of London, measured along the back from muzzle to tail, three feet nine inches.

“This animal was obtained from Borneo when very young, and during the voyage to England was the constant associate of a monkey and other animals. In confinement, it

greatly resembled the Maylayan bear; but its habits in a state of nature are not accurately known.

“A gentleman in England has given a most interesting account of this little creature. It readily distinguishes the keeper, he says, and shows an attachment to him. On his approach, it employs all its efforts to obtain food, uttering at the same time a coarse, but

not unpleasant whining sound. This it continues while it consumes its food, alternately with a low grunting noise; but if teased at this time, it suddenly raises its voice, and utters harsh and grating sounds. It is excessively voracious, and appears to be disposed to eat without cessation.

“When in good humor, it often amuses the spectators in a different manner. Calmly

seated in its apartment, it expands its jaws, and protrudes its long, slender tongue. It displays on many occasions not only much gentleness of disposition, but a good degree of sagacity. It appears grateful for the kind treatment it receives from its keeper.

“On seeing him, it often places itself in a variety of attitudes to court his attention and caresses. It delights in

being patted and rubbed, and even allows strangers to do this; but it violently resents abuse or ill treatment; and having been irritated, refuses to be courted while the person who has offended him remains in sight.

“This bear at last fell a victim to its voracity. It overgorged itself one morning, and died within ten minutes after the meal.”

CHAPTER V.

ANECDOTES OF BEARS.

“I HAVE a few anecdotes to tell you of tame bears,” said Mr. Sears, looking around on his smiling audience, “and then we will bid goodby to his excellency. I once heard the following story :

“In the summer of 1825, a tame bear became fond of

climbing up the scaffolding placed round a brick stalk. He ascended very steadily, cautiously examining, as he went along, the various joists, to see if they were secure. At length he reached the summit of the scaffolding, one hundred and twenty feet high. Bruin had no sooner attained the object of his wishes, than he exhibited great delight. He looked about him with much joy, and

surveyed the building operations going on. The workmen were much amused with their novel visitor. Every mark of civility and attention was shown him, which he patronizingly returned by presenting them, in good humor, with a shake of his paw. A lime-bucket was now hoisted, in order to lower him down ; and the workmen, with all due courtesy, were going to assist

him into it; but he declined their attentions, and preferred returning in the manner he had gone up."

The children laughed; but checked themselves as Mr. Sears resumed:

"Bears are not unfrequently domesticated in Wermeland. Mr. Lloyd gives an account of one that was so tame that his master, a peasant, used occasionally to cause him to stand

at the back of his sledge when on a journey; but the fellow kept so good a balance that it was next to impossible to upset him. When the vehicle went on one side, Bruin threw his weight the other way; and when the other side came up, he threw himself in the opposite direction — so preserving the balance. One day, however, the peasant amused himself by driving over the very

worst ground he could find, with the intention, if possible, of throwing the bear off his balance. By his efforts, the animal got so irritated that he fetched his master, who was in advance of him, a tremendous blow on his shoulders with his paw. This frightened the man so much, that he caused the beast to be killed immediately.

“ Yet the bear is capable of

generous attachment. Leopold had one, called Marco, of great sagacity and sensibility. In the winter of 1709, a boy, ready to perish with cold in a barn into which he had been put by a good woman, with some more of his companions, thought proper to enter Marco's hut, without reflecting on the danger of thus exposing himself to the mercy of the beast which occupied it.

“Marco, however, instead of doing any injury to the child, took him between his paws, and warmed him by pressing him to his breast until the next morning, when he suffered him to depart to ramble about the city. The boy returned in the evening to the hut, and was received with the same affection. For several days he had no other retreat; and it added not a little

to his joy, to perceive that the bear regularly reserved a part of his food for him. A number of days passed in this manner without the servants knowing anything of the circumstance.

“ At length, when one of them came on a certain day to bring the animal its supper, rather later than usual, he was astonished to see the bear roll his eyes in a furious manner ; yea, and appear as if he wished

him to make as little noise as possible, for fear of waking the child, whom he clasped to his breast. The bear, though ravenous, did not appear the least moved with the food which was placed before him.

“The report of this extraordinary circumstance soon reached the court; yea, even the ears of Leopold, who, with part of his courtiers, was desirous of being satisfied of the

truth of Marco's generosity. Several of them passed the night near his hut, and beheld with astonishment that the bear never stirred as long as his guest showed an inclination to sleep.

“ At break of day the child awoke, was very much ashamed to find himself discovered, and, fearing that he would be punished for his temerity, begged pardon. The bear, however,

caressed him, and endeavored to prevail on him to eat what had been brought in the evening before. This he did, at the request of the spectators.

“Having learned the whole history of this singular alliance and the time which it had continued, Leopold ordered care to be taken of the little boy, who, doubtless, would have made his fortune, had he not died a short time after.”

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